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PSYX 230.50: Developmental Psychology

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PSYX 230 – Developmental Psychology

Spring Semester 2016

Instructor Information

Instructor: Kaitlyn (Katie) Ahlers

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Office: Skaggs 053

Office hours: Monday 12:00 – 1:30 p.m., Wednesday 8:00 – 9:30 a.m.

[Psychology Department URL](#)

Required Text

Child Development: A Thematic Approach, 6th Edition – Bukatko & Daehler

Course Overview

The development of an individual is a never-ending process. This course is not only about children and adolescence, but also each and every one of our own lives and development. Although personal anecdotes and experiences are interesting, bear in mind that this course will focus on developmental theories, research, and practice derived from scientific study. This course will take a chronological approach exploring the physical, cognitive, and socio-emotional areas at each stage of development.

Course Objectives

1. Understand basic scientific knowledge, terminology, research results, and theories of developmental psychology from birth through adolescence.
2. Understand normal development and its variations in the areas of cognition, socio-emotional, and physical development from birth through adolescence.
3. Understand relationships between scientific research and practical applications in the areas of child and adolescent development.
4. Understand scientific research methods in developmental psychology.
5. Acquire critical thinking skills in interpreting research in developmental psychology.

Course Assignments & Grading Criteria

Assignments for this class include exams, assignments, and discussions.

Exams

- Exams will be multiple-choice, true/false, and short answer. They will NOT be cumulative. That is, each exam will only test on the material from the current developmental period under discussion.
- Anything from readings, assignments, and slides may appear on exams.
- All exams must be taken. There will be no makeup exams!
- Exams will be administered via Moodle. Please note the following:
 - No late exams will be accepted, regardless of computer problems.

- No alternative assignments will be made for giving any exam early due to travel plans, school projects, or other course requirements. This includes the final.
- Exams will be available for one week, due by 11:55PM on the Friday of the week that they are due. Once started, you will have 2 hours to complete an exam. Make sure you do not start the test until you are ready to finish it in one sitting!
- Although exams are open book and open note, keep in mind that this two hours is intended for you to read and submit answers to Moodle. It is recommended that you study before the test, as you will not be able to look up each question's answer in enough time.
- Again, the honesty policy is in effect, meaning that you are expected to take the exam on your own and not confer with others on it.

Save your exam frequently! It is recommended to make a note of your answers (in a separate file/document) in the event that the exam does not get submitted to Moodle and you need to reenter your answers.

Assignment Buffet

- You must choose five of the following assignments over the course of the semester. The five you choose, and the order you select them, will be up to you.
 - Compare/contrast child rearing practices in two different cultures. Based on what you have learned, which elements of childrearing are the most appropriate in each culture and which are troublesome?
 - Naturalistic observation. Find a place where there are babies/children/adolescents (this can be a park, museum, sporting event, etc.) and observe a phenomenon of interest discussed in class. Write a detailed description of what you observe.
 - A young couple with a three-month-old infant is finding it difficult to make ends meet on just one income. They come to you (as a child development expert) and ask for your advice on whether or not daycare will damage their child in any way. What advice would you give them?
 - How should parents minimize the effects of divorce on children? What factors do they need to consider? What effects should they be aware of?
 - Choose a topic of interest from the class and interview a child, teen, parent, teacher, childcare provider, etc. to gain further insight into the topic.
 - Compare/contrast childhood today with another period in history. What are the pros/coms involved in growing up in Western cultures today?
 - Watch a film focusing predominantly on a child character. Discuss the child's development over the course of the film in relation to what you have learned in class.
- Papers should be approximately two pages double-spaced with 1" margins (this is not the default). Size 12 font Times New Roman. Be sure to integrate concepts discussed in class and cite outside sources when appropriate. Do not just give your opinion on a particular issue.
- You will email me your assignment prior to 11:55 p.m. on the date listed.

- Graded as Incomplete, Adequate, Excellent
 - Incomplete – 4-9 points (inaccurate/weak/incorrect answers)
 - Adequate – 10-14 points (complete but may lack in fuller detail)
 - Excellent – 15 points (full explanations, insight, and detail)

Discussions

Doing well on the Discussion Board assignment requires consistent and detailed participation each week and is the participation and essay portion of the course. Grades are based on (1) attendance and (2) quality of your posts. It does not include any posts made in the “Q &A” Discussions. Full credit requires high quality and maximum frequency posts. The two charts below explain how your discussion posts are graded.

<u>ATTENDANCE GRADING (30 points possible)</u>		
Students must post (respond) a <u>minimum of three separate days per week</u> . You can post more than three days, and post more than three times, but at a minimum, you must post on three separate days.	3 days	30 points
	2 days	20 points
	1 day	10 points
	0 days	0 points

Once the number of days is calculated, students are then graded based on their contributions to the discussion. The following points are deducted, not added, from the points earned above, to yield a final weekly “attendance” score. (Students cannot earn negative points. The lowest possible score is zero.)

Students must make a post to the discussion question in the weekly discussion forum. Each weekly discussion question post will be due by Friday	Each day late	2 pts lost
Students must post (respond) to a <u>minimum of three of their peers</u> . You can post to more than three, but at a minimum, you must reply to three of your peers. This promotes student engagement with each other, rather than just responding to the discussion questions posted by the instructor	3 peers	0 pts lost
	2 peers	3 pts lost
	1 peer	6 pts lost
	0 peers	9 pts lost

Once I have calculated your final weekly “attendance” score, then I grade the quality of your posts, as explained below. Again, the following points are deducted, not added, from the final weekly “attendance” score, to yield a final weekly “Discussion” score. (Students cannot earn negative points. The lowest score is a zero.)

<u>QUALITY GRADING</u>		
Students must make detailed and thoughtful posts that reflect an appropriate application of emerging knowledge and vocabulary in the topic area. Each post must add value to the discussion and be related to the required readings for the week. Below are additional details of how I grade the quality of your posts.	Superior	0 pts lost
	Above Average	4 pts lost
	Average	8 pts lost
	Below Average	12 pts lost
	Unacceptable	16 pts lost

Superior: Your contributions demonstrate a complete mastery of the materials assigned. Your responses might integrate multiple views and/or show strong analysis and reflection on topics and other student's posts. You provide evidence that you are reading the assigned materials and other student postings and are responding accordingly, bringing out interesting interpretations. You know the facts and are able to analyze them, apply them to real life scenarios and handle conceptual ideas. It is highly unlikely that you could get full credit in less than two paragraphs.

Above Average: Your responses build on the ideas of other participants and dig deeper into assignment questions or issues. When you make intelligent posts during the week, including some good critique of the course material, then you have demonstrated you have an understanding of the material, are reading posts of your colleagues, and are contributing to the class. Your posts demonstrate confidence with the materials, but may be just a bit off target in one area or another.

Average: You have meaningful interaction with other participants' postings. Posts that state, "I agree" or "I disagree" and include a detailed explanation of what is disagreed or agreed upon and why, or introduce a perspective or concept that adds to the discussion. However, you may have rambling, lengthy posts with no clear point, your writing has a lack of clarity and comprehension, or there are considerable typos and grammatical errors.

Below Average: You answer questions asked by me or other students but do not expand upon your response or you answer questions based only on your opinion, rather than on research or proper evidence. Your posts are unusually short (one paragraph or less) and you fail to demonstrate a clear working knowledge of the material covered for the week.

Unacceptable: You will receive little credit in the week's discussion by just showing up and making trivial comments, without adding any new thought to the discussion. At the low end of the spectrum, no participation gets a "0." If you are not in the discussion, you do not earn any points. Comments such as "I agree" or other one-sentence responses will result in zero points. Copying and pasting from a website without providing your own substantial insight is also an unacceptable post- even if you have properly cited your sources. This assignment is an assessment of your understanding of the information covered in this class. Copying and pasting from websites does not demonstrate a working knowledge of the material.

As I'm sure you can imagine, posts and responses must be informed by the reading. Therefore, I expect that the reading assigned for a given week will be completed by Monday (Chapter 1 is assigned for the

week of 2/1 – 2/5, so I expect it to be DONE by Monday 2/1). For some weeks, I will include additional readings to help inform your discussion posts.

Special Note: I check very carefully for plagiarism in the discussion posts. If you have plagiarized, you will get a zero for the entire assignment. If you plagiarize a second time, you will fail the course. If you engage in flaming behavior in the posts, you will get a zero for the entire assignment.

Course Grading

Your final grade for the course will consist of scores on exams, discussion posts, and writing assignments. Your final grade is the percentage of the total points earned divided by total possible points. There is no course curve in this class.

The following chart breaks down the points for each assignment type.

Criteria	Possible points
Exams (5, at 50 pts ea)	250 points possible
Discussion Posts (13 each, at 30 pts ea; welcome discussion worth 15 pts)	405 points possible
5 Buffet Assignments (15 points each)	75 points possible
Total Points	730 points possible

The following chart shows the Grade scale for the Final Course grade.

Final Course Grade	# Points	Percentage
A	653 – 730	89.5% - 100%
B	580 – 652	79.5% – 89%
C	507 – 579	69.5% – 79%
D	434 – 506	59.5% – 69%
F	0 – 433	< 59.5%

Course Policies and Guidelines

Announcements

Students are responsible for all announcements made in class. These may include changes in policy, due dates, or assignments requirements. Announcements are posted in the announcements section of the course or are directly emailed to the students.

Technology Policies

Please contact UM Online if you experience technical difficulties. Though I would love to be able to help, I am not qualified to do so. *Critical note: I do not allow technical issues for not having the proper software as reasons for late or incomplete work.* To ensure your protection, please keep technical support contact information available offline and please do not wait until the last minute to complete

your work each week! To access technical support (and save their contact information offline) please click on the “Tech Support” link to the left of the page.

Technical Alternatives

Also, keep in mind your technical alternative if you have computer difficulties. If you live near the University, campus computers are an option. Otherwise, consider the public library, an internet café, a computer at work, or a friend or family member’s computer. Have a plan of action in mind so that you can complete the required work each week if an issue arises.

Assignment Due Dates, Late Work, and Make-up Work

Assignments are due every week on Friday by 11:55pm MST. Please be sure to start your assignments early enough to complete them by the time the week closes.

As a rule, I do not accept late work or allow make-up work, except for one “freebie.” No reason is required to take advantage of this opportunity, and it is the student’s responsibility to contact the instructor to make this happen. Students have 24 hours to make up the work from the time I send the make-up assignment email, and students are not permitted to use the “freebie” at any time during finals week. Aside from this one freebie, no extra points will be given and no extra credit will be assigned.

Students cannot, under any circumstance, make up the discussion posts assignment. Due to the interactive nature of this assignment, students must be engaged in this process throughout the week each week in order to receive credit.

To make up multiple missed assignments it is mandatory that you 1) notify your instructor before the time of the assignment and 2) provide proper documentation verifying the reason for your absence. Examples of proper documentation include a medical note or a death or family emergency. Remember, prior notification and documentation is mandatory! You can provide documentation by 1) scanning and emailing documents, 2) mailing the documents, or 3) bringing them by my office during office hours. I do not allow students to make up work until I have received the proper documents. I do not allow make up work during the week of final exams.

Grades of Incomplete

Departmental and university policies regarding incompletes do not allow changing “incomplete” grades after one year has passed since the “I” was granted.

Academic Misconduct

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the [Student Conduct Code](#).

Plagiarism

The Student Conduct Code discusses plagiarism. However, it is a serious offense worth re-mentioning. This course requires students to adhere to APA format when citing, paraphrasing, or referencing

sources. If you have plagiarized, either intentionally or accidentally, you will receive a zero on the entire assignment. If you plagiarize a second time, you will fail the course.

Netiquette

Students must engage in proper “netiquette.” Netiquette or “network etiquette” is a professional and mannerly way of communicating with others in the online medium. Failure to engage in proper netiquette will result in earning a zero for each assignment where an incident has occurred.

Disability Modifications

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and [Disability Services for Students](#). If you think you may have a disability adversely affecting your academic performance, and you have not already registered with Disability Services, please contact Disability Services in Lommasson Center 154 or call 406-243-2243. I will work with you and Disability Services to provide an appropriate modification.

Dropping/Adding/Changing grade option

Please refer to the [Registrar’s Office webpage](#) for information and policies.

Tentative Course Schedule

Units	Readings Due	Assignments & Discussions Due	Exams
<i>Week 1 (1/25 – 1/29)</i> How to be an online student	Syllabus Netiquette Guidelines Questionnaire-Online Learning Time Management Calendar	Welcome Discussion	
<i>Week 2 (2/1 – 2/5)</i> Themes and Theories	Child Development: Chapter 1	Week 2 Discussion	
<i>Week 3 (2/8 – 2/12)</i> Studying Child Development	Child Development: Chapter 2	Week 3 Discussion Assignment buffet #1 (Due Mon. 2/8)	
<i>Week 4 (2/15 – 2/19)</i> Genes and Heredity	Child Development: Chapter 3 Pro Sex Selection Against Sex Selection	Week 4 Discussion	Exam #1
<i>Week 5 (2/22 – 2/26)</i> The Prenatal Period and Birth	Child Development: Chapter 4	Week 5 Discussion	
<i>Week 6 (2/29 – 3/4)</i> Brain, Motor Skill, and Physical Development	Child Development: Chapter 5 Pro and against abstinence-only education	Week 6 Discussion Assignment buffet #2 (Due Mon. 2/29)	
<i>Week 7 (3/7 – 3/11)</i> Language	Child Development: Chapter 7	Week 7 Discussion	Exam # 2
<i>Week 8 (3/14 – 3/18)</i> Cognition	Child Development: Chapter 8	Week 8 Discussion	

Units	Readings Due	Assignments & Discussions Due	Exams
<i>Week 9 (3/21 – 3/25)</i> <i>Social Cognition</i>	Child Development: Chapter 9	Week 9 Discussion Assignment buffet #3 (Due Mon. 3/21)	
<i>Week 10 (3/28 – 4/1)</i> <i>Emotion</i>	Child Development: Chapter 11 Website exploration	Week 10 Discussion	Exam #3
<i>SPRING BREAK (4/4 – 4/8)</i>	Happy spring break – enjoy the week off!		
<i>Week 11 (4/11 – 4/15)</i> <i>Self and Values</i>	Child Development: Chapter 12	Week 11 Discussion	
<i>Week 12 (4/18 – 4/22)</i> <i>Gender</i>	Child Development: Chapter 13	Week 12 Discussion Assignment buffet #4 (Due Mon. 4/18)	
<i>Week 13 (4/25 – 4/29)</i> <i>The Family</i>	Child Development: Chapter 14	Week 13 Discussion	Exam #4
<i>Week 14 (5/2 – 5/6)</i> <i>Peers</i> <i>Beyond Family and Peers</i>	Child Development: Chapter 15 Read: Child Development: Chapter 16 (no discussion post for this chapter)	Week 14 Discussion	
<i>Week 15 (5/9 – 5/13)</i> <i>Finals Week</i>		Assignment buffet #5 (Due Mon. 5/9)	Exam # 5